

## Mileage pay is increased

The city of Farmington coffers won't go broke even though the council agreed Dec. 21 to raise employee vehicle mileage.

The city currently reimburses employees 20 cents a mile for use of personal cars in city business. Action taken during its regular council meeting raised that amount to 23 cents, according to city clerk records.

It's been years, City Manager Robert Deadman said, since the city has improved its mileage formula.

By Chris Rizk  
staff writer

Farmington City Council gave the go-ahead for plans to rezone property near Longacre School on the city's west side for a condominium development.

The unanimous decision Monday night ended a more than yearlong wait by Farmington developer Frank Milo. It paves the way for planning commission approval of the proposed site plan.

Council approval was needed to rezone about 1.24 acres south of Arundel before Milo could ask for site plan approval from the planning commission.

The council's action allows for rezoning the land, part of which straddles neighboring Farmington Hills, from one-family residential (R-1-C) to one-family cluster (R-6).

"The planning commission has looked at the project a couple of times and has indicated that they pretty well accepted the idea," said city manager Robert Deadman.

Milo plans to develop the vacant property south of the residences on Arundel into condominiums.

PART OF the project, expected to begin next spring, will abut the Beechwood Estates subdivision in Farmington Hills and property not yet developed.

Farmington Hills officials gave site plan approval for construction of 14 cluster housing units subject to rezoning in Farmington, said Ed Gardiner, Farmington Hills city planner.

Monday night's action ends speculation the project would be held up because of further citizen complaints.

At a public hearing in January, neighbors surrounding the proposed project voiced objections to the increased traffic flow that would result from the development.

Longacre Elementary School lies next to the project.

"I guess what the city is saying now is that they're happy with what

I'm doing," Milo said. "There was never any question about safety of the children. We are always going to be cautious about any crossings where children are concerned."

According to Gardiner, traffic density increase was so insignificant that even if houses, vs. the cluster configuration proposed by Milo, were put in "it would result in the same amount of traffic" in the area.

DEADMAN SAID the development would "act as a buffer" between eventual construction of multifamily housing along Freedom and the Woodcroft subdivision in Farmington Hills.

"The concern was that if this property didn't develop as was proposed, then the property could be sold off for multifamily use," Deadman said.

Several council members expressed concern over police and fire protection in the condominium complex.

Once built, portions of the complex would come under the city of Farmington Hills and the city of

Farmington public safety department.

According to Deadman, each community would serve its own sections. "This situation exists in another condominium unit in the Hawthorne subdivision," he told the council. "There's no confusion as to who provides police and fire safety."

Water and a sanitary sewer for the complex is expected to be furnished by the city of Farmington. Drain services along Gili will be provided by the city of Farmington Hills, Deadman said.

MILO, PRESENT during Monday night's meeting, said he was relieved that the approval for his development was "almost over."

The 14 Cape Cod-style units, eight detached, will be sold for about \$150,000, Milo said.

The detached 1 1/2-story units will have about 2,170 square feet, with one bedroom downstairs and two bedrooms on the upper level.

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## Residents rally for pole relocation

By Chris Rizk  
staff writer

Meadowbrook Hills residents in southwest Farmington Hills may have been barking up the right tree when they voiced complaints over placement of electrical poles in their neighborhood.

As a result, Detroit Edison, which planned to erect 75-foot electrical poles on the north side of Eight Mile near I-275, is trying to move them to the south side of the road in an effort to ease tensions, officials said.

The poles would replace existing 40-foot poles. They would serve businesses in Northville and Novi, both neighboring communities. Moving the poles across Eight Mile to the south would mean placing them in Livonia near the Greenmead historic district.

"We just wanted some sort of response from Detroit Edison," said Beth Mocerri, a Meadowbrook Hills resident. "We feel like this whole thing has been shoved down our throats."

Edison began installation last month. Work was halted shortly after because of resident complaints, said Thomas Blasell, Farmington Hills Department of Public Service director.

According to Mocerri, residents were concerned that existing poles were being replaced with additional poles that would continue east and west along Eight Mile in Farmington Hills.

Edison is replacing 17 poles with 19 new ones.

"WHY SHOULD they do this to us, as taxpayers, when these poles aren't even servicing us?" Mocerri said. "Why couldn't they have chosen a different routing that doesn't impact so much on a residential area?"

The project apparently would have placed poles in front of houses along Eight Mile, where no poles currently exist, according to Blasell. "I'm sure it's a situation that Edison runs into a lot," he said. "Nobody

likes having a street light or pole in their front yard."

Edison officials, eager to address complaints, said the project was halted once residents expressed their concerns.

"We've made a commitment to (the residents) and we will be communicating with the city," said Joe Chambers, Edison's Oakland County division director of engineering and planning. "We stopped because they raised the question of alternate routing."

Chambers, who declined to discuss alternate routes, said Edison "is not ready to move yet" on the project.

Homeowners in the area said a Dec. 8 meeting with residents, city and Edison officials raised the question of underground wiring.

ACCORDING TO Mocerri, residents were told it would be more costly and those costs would be assessed to the residents.

"We didn't think we should be soaked for the additional poles that

are serving Northville and Novi," Mocerri said. "We wanted to get with the city of Novi to see if some sort of compromise could be met."

Edison and city officials met this week to discuss moving the poles out of Farmington Hills, to the south side of Eight Mile, Blasell said.

Edison, which already has received a permit from the Wayne County Road Commission, would have to receive permission to alter its plans, according to a Wayne County engineer.

"If they're going to move from the alignment originally approved, then they would need a new permit or an addendum to the existing one," Greg Harrison, permit engineer. "I'm not aware of any new plans."

Harrison added that minor changes could have been made in the field to facilitate plans, but any "major revisions would have to come back here."

Wayne County has jurisdiction over that portion of Eight Mile where the poles currently exist.

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